

England and the Suez Canal.

Towards the latter end of the year 1875 the Khedive of Egypt—who had been one of the most profligate of her many profligate rulers—found himself suddenly a bankrupt; but, out of the 400,000 shares into which the Suez Canal scheme was divided, he possessed nearly one-half—176,000—of the number. These shares were now in the market, and Mr. Disraeli, leader of the British Government, with that rare prescience which so characterised him, saw there was a splendid opportunity, not only of achieving a great financial but also a great political success, as it would in time give England the supreme control of that great highway to our Indian possessions. Promptitude was necessary, as a French company were negotiating for the purchase; but, their terms being too severe, the Khedive accepted the proposals of the British Government to buy up his shares in the Canal under certain conditions.

The number of shares purchased by Mr. Disraeli's Government were 176,702, the price paid being £4,076,000, or \$23 1s. 8d. per share. Upon this £4,000,000 the Egyptian Government has paid an interest ever since at the rate of 5 per cent., and will continue to do so till the year 1894, when the shares purchased will rank equally with the other shares, and receive full profits. That is to say, if the company is then paying 20 per cent. The British shares will receive that percentage. In thirty-seven years at the outside, from 1875 (the date of purchase) the whole capital sum of £4,000,000 will be recouped by the difference (viz., 15 per cent.) between the five per cent. interest paid by Egypt to us, and the 20 per cent. interest at which the British Government borrowed the £4,000,000. But, as the shares after 1894 participate in the full profits of the company, the capital sum will probably be all paid back in twenty-one or twenty-two years. The nation will then possess 176,000 shares, without having paid a farthing for them! England got three directors, and in 1894, by virtue of the shares she possesses, will be entitled to nine or ten more.

The transaction at the time met with almost general approval, but there was one notable exception who had boasted "that he had not rested day or night to thwart the purposes of that man." Mr. Gladstone, speaking at Glasgow on December 5th, 1878, characterised the purchase of the Suez Canal shares as "a financial operation of a ridiculous description." But it was Mr. Gladstone's description that was ridiculous, as eighteen months later he was bound to confess his error. Questioned on the subject in the House of Commons on April 1st, 1881, after stating the amount for which the shares had been purchased, he proceeded to say, "With regard to the question, whether these shares could not be sold, it is quite evident that they could be sold at a considerable profit. It is stated that the present value of the shares is £78, and that is the price which I understand has been recently obtained * * * and they may consequently be said to have gained £4,750,000 on the purchase of the shares."

Holy Men of Morocco.

The writer of an article on Morocco in the *Cornhill Magazine*, says: Sanctity in Morocco proceeds from various causes: you may be born with it, or you may get it at any time during your life. What one might call congenital holiness is also divisible into two kinds: First, there are those who are more or less descended from the Prophet—these are the Sheriffs of highest pretension, and their sanctity is a very comfortable source of income to them; they receive presents from all the faithful, and the most cheerful participation in all the vices known to Islam and Christendom combined does not seem to jeopardize their title to holiness. For example, let us suppose a saintly descendant of the Prophet—who most uncompromisingly forbade intoxicating drinks—is, by the munificence of believers, enabled to drink champagnes to excess. It does not matter, says the subtle-minded Arab, the Angel of God will not permit his saint to sin, but changes this liquid wickedness into milk in his mouth, and so, without sinning, he can get very drunk indeed. The other class of congenital saints are idiots. Of the validity of this title I was not very well able to judge, and can easily understand some confusion in people's minds. I have seen a holy man of this category of sanctity one day draped in a gaudy Kidderminster carpet, smiling with all the consciousness of a dandy as he swaggered through the crowded Soko, hauled on the morrow before the Calief and thrown into the common prison. His offence was a petty attack with a knife upon someone who had offended him and, from the shouts of the crowd who followed, it was evident that they were very pleased with the calamity which had befallen this good man. But holiness may be earned by a life of devotion; and a gentleman who had accompanied a diplomatic mission to the imperial city of Fez, told me that he there saw an aged and very corpulent man who was seeking Paradise by lying naked in the middle of a crowded street; he had lain there for years, day and night, fed by the charitable, the ground actually hollowed by the weight of adipose sanctity. Women are even known to become saints, but I do not know by what means they attain this eminence, which is very rare among the sex in Mohammedan countries.

The Old Cannon at Quebec.

The best part of Mr. Atkinson's narrative was his dramatic story of his visit to the citadel.

"An officer," said he, "detailed a

man to show me around, and he took me everywhere.

"Noticing a small black cannon, half hidden by the snow, as I was about to go, I said in fun: 'I guess I'll take it away with me.'"

"Go look at the inscription on the breech," said the soldier laughing.

"I looked and read: 'Taken at the battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775.'"

"I saw the soldier had me. It stirred my blood and I wanted to make a fit reply. I read the inscription over again to gain time. Tears came to my eyes. 'Young man,' I said to him, 'you've got the cannon, but we've got Bunker Hill.'"

The patriotic son of Maine turned red and actually cried again as he repeated the story.—Lewiston (Me.) Journal.

Minneapolis in 1886.

The *Tribune* of Minneapolis in its review of the year gives some interesting figures relative to population, trade and building in 1886. It estimates the total population now at 165,000, with the following comparisons:

Year.	Population.	Year.	Population.
1880	40,000	1886	165,000
1885	130,000		

The building record during the year is estimated as follows:

Year.	Buildings Val.	Year.	Buildings Val.
1886	4,500	1884	2,500
1885	3,400	1883	2,500
1886	3,400	1885	2,500

The labor difficulties of the last spring curtailed the year's building to some extent. The estimated value of the manufactured products of the city is placed at \$62,500,000 against \$54,000,000 in 1885. The jobbing and wholesale trade is estimated at \$155,300,000 against \$137,000,000 in 1885. The real estate market has also been very active, and according to the paper named the year just closed deserves special mention as a prosperous one in the history of the city.

The Late Captain Eads.

Captain James B. Eads was born at Lawrenceburg, Indiana, May 20, 1820. He moved with his parents in 1829 to Louisville, and in 1833 to St. Louis, where he has since lived. At the outbreak of the civil war he submitted to the Government a plan for the defence of the Western waters, and designed and constructed, in 1862 and 1863, the first eight ironclad steamers in the United States Navy. He afterwards designed and built six ironclad gunboats with rotating turrets. These boats were material aid to the military operations on the Mississippi river and its branches. He projected and built the Illinois and St. Louis bridge a marvel of engineering and mechanical skill. The jetty system at the mouth of the Mississippi river is another monument to his memory. Of late years Captain Eads devoted himself to the project of constructing a ship canal across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Mexico, having faith in his ability to build a railroad to carry ships. He asked Congressional aid to carry out the enterprise, but was unsuccessful for years, until the last session, when a law was passed granting him what he asked. Captain Eads, as an engineer, stood at the head of his profession in the world as a bold thinker, and for industry and persistency had no superior.

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